

REMARKS

The above amendments are submitted within the three-month period for response to the Final Office Action mailed May 26, 2006 and in connection with a Request for Continued Examination (RCE). Authorization to charge the \$790.00 requisite fee is hereby included in the Electronic Fee Sheet attached. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested.

In the subject Office Action, claims 1, 4-23 and 26-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,535,227 to Fox et al. Furthermore, claims 2-3 and 24-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fox et al. and EP 06787977 A2 to Davis.

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejections to the extent that they are maintained. Applicants have canceled claims 13 and 33, amended claims 1, 14, 16-17, 23, 34-36, 40 and 42, and added claims 44-45. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is being added by the above amendments, as the amendments are fully supported in the specification, drawings and claims as originally filed.

Now turning to the subject Office Action, and specifically to independent claim 1, this claim generally recites a method of managing computer hardware components. The method includes displaying a pictorial representation on a computer display, the pictorial representation associated with a plurality of hardware components and representing a physical configuration of each of the plurality of hardware components, and in response to user input, indicating a selected status for multiple hardware components from the plurality of hardware components within the pictorial representation associated with the plurality of hardware components.

Applicants maintain the traversal of the Examiner's rejection for the same reasons discussed in Applicants' prior response, namely that Fox does not disclose a "pictorial representation" as so defined in the Application and recited in claim 1. Instead, Fox discloses at most an iconic or diagrammatic representation given that the icons disclosed in Fox (e.g., as shown in Figs. 1-2, 7, 9 and 10) do not convey any relative physical configuration between the represented components.

Nonetheless, the Examiner will note that Applicants have amended claim 1 to additionally recite the following additional steps:

- for at least one selected hardware component among the multiple hardware components having a selected status, retrieving a list of available management operations associated therewith; and
- performing a management operation from among the list of available management operations on all of the multiple hardware components that have a selected status responsive to user input.

For consistency with this amendment, claim 13 has been canceled, and claims 16 and 17 have been amended. Support for these amendments may be found, for example, in Figs. 8-9 and at page 21, line 15 to page 22, line 19 of the Application as filed.

As such, claim 1 focuses on the concept of generating a list of available management operations based upon at least one selected hardware among those having a selected status, and then performing a management operation from the list on all of the selected hardware components. As a practical example, with such an embodiment a user could select multiple disk drives in a system, pull up a list of available management operations appropriate for one or more of the disk drives (e.g., defragment, virus check or format all drives), and then perform one of the available management operations on all of the selected disk drives. As a consequence, a user desiring to perform the operation on all of the disk drives would not have to individually select each disk drive and separately invoke the appropriate management operation on that individual disk drive, thus saving substantial time and effort on the part of the user.

Applicants submit that neither Fox, nor any other prior art of record, discloses this combination of features. In rejecting claim 13, which originally recited the concept of performing a management operation on all selected hardware components, the Examiner continues to rely on col. 3, lines 23-26 and 29-32 of Fox. However, Applicants can find no reference to a management operation in these passages, much less one performed on multiple hardware components. The passages cited by the Examiner merely disclose that

network icons may be displayed in a network map with colors that indicate security vulnerabilities for various network elements represented in the map.

Furthermore, in col. 3, lines 33-44 of Fox, an operation is disclosed whereby a data sensitivity and a vulnerability profile may be set for a node; however, it is important to note that these operations are performed on single nodes in the network. The Examiner's attention is also directed to Figs. 8A-8B and col. 8, line 64 to col. 9, line 25, which describe these node setting operations in further detail as being performed on individual nodes.

As such, Applicants submit that Fox does not disclose "performing a management operation . . . on all of the multiple hardware components that have a selected status responsive to user input," as required by claim 1. Claim 1 is therefore novel over Fox, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Applicants also can find no disclosure in Fox that is relevant to the concept of retrieving a list of available management operations associated with at least one selected hardware component among multiple selected hardware components, or of performing a management operation that is selected from such a list. In rejecting claim 16, which originally recited the concept of retrieving a list of available management operations, the Examiner relies on Fig. 8 of Fox. However, Fig. 8A discloses a selection of a data sensitivity for a node, and presents different options from "unclassified" to "top secret." These options, however, are all used as parameters in the same management operation - setting the data sensitivity - and are not different management operations from a "list of available management operations." Likewise, Fig. 8B discloses a number of parameters related to a vulnerability profile, yet all of these parameters are set for the same management operation - setting a vulnerability profile. In addition, there is no disclosure in the reference of any "retrieval" of a list of available management operations. It appears, if anything, that the dialog boxes illustrated in Figs. 8A-8B are statically defined, and presented in the same manner for every potential node in the system.

As such, Applicants additionally submit that Fox does not disclose "retrieving a list of available management operations associated [with at least one selected hardware component]" or "performing a management operation from among the list of available

management operations," as is also required by claim 1. Claim 1 is therefore novel over Fox for this additional reason, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Applicants also submit that claim 1 is non-obvious over Fox and the other prior art of record, as the Examiner has provided no objective evidence as to a motivation in the art to modify Fox to incorporate the ability to retrieve a list of available management operations for at least one selected hardware component and perform a management operation from such a list on multiple selected hardware components in response to user input.

As a final matter with respect to claim 1, the Examiner argues, at pp. 10-11 of the Final Office Action, that Fox discloses the display of a selected status of a hardware component, as well as the performance of management operations on multiple hardware components. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's position as to these matters. With respect to the display of a selected status of a hardware component, the Examiner cites col. 3, lines 30-45, but this passage merely discloses displaying network elements in different colors based upon security vulnerability. The display is not of a "selected status", and in particular, the display is not of a selected status where the selection is made "in response to user input."

Likewise, with respect to the performance of management operations on multiple hardware components, the Examiner cites Fig. 7 and col. 3, lines 29-32 and 60-67 of Fox. Fig. 7, however, merely discloses a discovery operation that displays a list of network elements, and there is no disclosure in this figure of any management operation that is performed on all of the listed elements. The passages at col. 3 disclose several dialog boxes that permit operations to be performed on individual nodes. While nodes are referred to in plural in the passages, it should be apparent from the preferred dialog boxes illustrated in Figs. 8A-8B, as well as the accompanying disclosure, that this passage does not disclose or suggest a dialog box that performs operations on multiple nodes at the same time. It is only through the benefit of hindsight that the Examiner could make such an assumption, given that the only disclosed embodiments use dialog boxes that are configured to operate on individual nodes at a time.

Applicants therefore submit that independent claim 1 is patentable over Fox and the other prior art of record. Reconsideration and allowance of independent claim 1, and of claims 2-12 and 14-22 that depend therefrom, are therefore respectfully requested.

Next with regard to independent claims 23 and 40, each of these claims has been amended in a similar manner to claim 1. In addition, claim 33 has been canceled, and claims 34-36 have been amended in a similar manner to claims 14-16. Given that claims 23 and 40 have been amended to recite similar subject matter to that in claim 1, these claims are therefore novel and non-obvious over Fox for the same reasons as presented above for claim 1. Reconsideration and allowance of these claims, as well as of claims 24-32, 34-39 and 41 which depend respectively therefrom, are therefore respectfully requested.

Next with regard to independent claim 42, this claim generally recites a method of managing computer hardware components. The method includes accessing a plurality of computers to identify a plurality of hardware components resident in the plurality of computers, dynamically generating a pictorial representation on a computer display, the pictorial representation associated with the plurality of computers and representing a physical configuration of each of the plurality of hardware components within the plurality of computers, and performing at least one management operation on multiple selected hardware components among the plurality of hardware components in response to user input directed to that portion of the pictorial representation that represents the physical configuration of one of the multiple selected hardware components.

In addition, claim 42 has been amended to clarify that performing the at least one management operation includes:

- retrieving a list of available management operations associated with the multiple selected hardware components, and
- selecting the management operation to be performed from the list of available management operations

As such, similar to claim 1, claim 42 recites the concept of retrieving a list of available management operations and performing a management operation selected from the list of available management operations. Claim 42 is therefore novel and non-obvious over Fox and the other prior art of record for the same reasons as presented above with respect to claim 1.

Claim 42 additionally recites the concept of retrieving a list of available management operations "associated with the multiple selected hardware components." As such, the claim requires that the list of available management operations include management operations that are appropriate for the multiple selected hardware components. Applicants can find no disclosure or suggestion in Fox of the concept of building a list of available management operations for multiple hardware components. As discussed above in connection with claim 1, the various operations performed in Fox are performed via dialog boxes that are specific to individual nodes, and in any event, appear to be the same configuration regardless of what node is involved (i.e., they are not context sensitive based upon the type of node at issue).

Claim 42 also specifies that the management operation is specifically "selected . . . from the list of available management operations." Applicants can find no disclosure or suggestion in Fox of selecting an operation from a list of available operations. As noted above, the dialog boxes in Fox are static in nature, and the various controls in the boxes are used to select different parameters or settings for a node or profile. The controls, however, are not used to select different operations.

Applicants therefore respectfully submit that claim 42 is also novel and non-obvious over Fox. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 42, and of claim 43 which depends therefrom, are therefore respectfully requested.

Applicants also traverse the Examiner's rejections of the various dependent claims based upon their dependency upon the aforementioned independent claims. However, a number of these dependent claims recite additional features not disclosed or suggested by the prior art of record. For example, claims 4 and 27 (reciting the use of a filter criterion), claims 7 and 29 (which disclose multiple filter criteria associated with different views), and claims 11 and 31 (which recite visually highlighting selected components) recite

features that are neither disclosed nor suggested by Fox or the other prior art of record. Reconsideration and allowance of these claims are therefore requested for these additional reasons.

In addition, the Examiner will note that claims 16 and 35 have been amended to recite that retrieving the list of available management operations associated with the at least one selected hardware component includes retrieving a list of available management operations associated with at least two selected hardware components among the multiple hardware components having a selected status in response to user input directed to that portion of the pictorial representation that depicts the physical configuration of at least one of the at least two selected hardware components.

Similar to claim 42, therefore, these claims generate a list of available management operations that are appropriate for multiple (i.e., at least two) selected hardware components. In addition, this list is retrieved specifically in response to user input directed to that portion of the pictorial representation that depicts the physical configuration of at least one of the selected hardware components. Applicants can find no disclosure in Fox that is relevant to either of these concepts. Fox does not even disclose that the dialog boxes displayed in Figs. 8A and 8B are generated in response to user input directed to the pictorial representation of a node. Furthermore, as discussed above in connection with claim 42, Applicants can find no disclosure in Fox related to generating a list of management operations that are associated with multiple hardware components. Claims 16 and 35 are therefore additionally patentable for these reasons.

The Examiner will also note that claims 17 and 36 have been amended to recite that the management operation is performed on all of the multiple hardware components that have a selected status responsive to user input directed to a context sensitive menu. The Examiner relies on col. 3 and Fig. 8 of Fox for allegedly disclosing a context sensitive menu; however, the dialog boxes disclosed in Fox are not "menus" much less context sensitive menus. They are instead dialog boxes that are known in the art to be distinct from context sensitive menus. Furthermore, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Fox that these dialog boxes may be "context sensitive", or tailored to display different operations based upon the type of nodes for which the boxes are being displayed. Rather,

it appears the dialog boxes are static in nature, and displayed in the same manner regardless of the type of node involved. Claims 17 and 36 are therefore additionally patentable for this reason.

As a final matter, Applicants have added new claims 44 and 45. Each of these claims additionally recites the concept of generating the list of available management operations to include only management operations that are appropriate for being performed on all of the multiple hardware components having a selected status. Put another way, the list of available management operations only includes those management operations that are appropriate for all of the selected hardware components. Applicants can find no relevant disclosure for this concept in Fox, and as such, these claims are patentable over Fox and the other prior art of record.

In summary, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are novel and non-obvious over the prior art of record. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are therefore respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding the foregoing, or which might otherwise further this case onto allowance, the Examiner may contact the undersigned at (513) 241-2324. Moreover, if any other charges or credits are necessary to complete this communication, please apply them to Deposit Account 23-3000.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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